Digital technologies in use in the dental practice and laboratory, new CAD/CAM processes, modern software for networking and work processes will be some of the main topics during IDS.

Its presence in the media, the expectations of patients, and not least its record of success in the dental practice and laboratory demonstrate that there is now no avoiding digital technology in the world of dentistry. Information about CAD/CAM systems and intra-oral scanners fill whole special editions in the dental press. Beyond treatment-related applications, software for accounting, purchases and documentation is also gaining in importance. Ever since dentists have been legally required to practise systematic quality management, computer-supported solutions have been increasingly in demand in that area as well. There is already brisk competition in the relatively young digital marketplace. Many companies are therefore continually increasing their efforts when it comes to development, especially in this sector. As a result, large numbers of innovations, new programs and more effective interfaces are keeping the area of digital technology on the move. In order to keep up with the fast pace of development, it is essential to establish direct contact with manufacturers and their products—and that is most easily achieved at the world’s leading and largest dental medicine and technology trade fair, the International Dental Show (IDS) in Cologne.

An excellent example of the strength of innovation in the dental industry is provided by the CAD/CAM-assisted production of dental prostheses. Among other factors, increasingly precise processes for centralised production lead to results that fit well and that save time and money. Modern programs can also help to make communicating with patients easier by providing a means of demonstrating the results before treatment begins. In this situation, these programs can help to noticeably reduce the time it takes to motivate patients and get them involved in the planning of their prostheses.
In order to serve the needs of patients even better, many dentist/dental technician teams use intra-oral scanners nowadays. Scanning replaces traditional impression taking and speeds up the workflow because information can be passed on digitally. Additionally, the problem of a sensitive gag reflex is eliminated. This reflex, which some patients find uncomfortable, often occurs when an impression material is used.

The transition to a digital practice and laboratory also includes areas beyond actual treatment. Modern IT systems provide for seamless networking. Useful software for ensuring data integrity, inventory control and billing, for example, is included in complete solution packages—as are indispensable tools for quality assurance and digital documentation.

Those interested in the many new developments in this sector would be well advised to consult directly and personally with the manufacturers at IDS 2013 in Cologne. From 12 to 16 March 2013, dentists and dental technicians will be offered the unique opportunity to not only experience all the latest innovations live, but also take advantage of the expertise of the dental industry during extensive technical discussions.

"The fact that the future will be digital was already clear at the last IDS," according to Dr Martin Rickert, Chairman of the Association of German Dental Manufacturers (VDDI). "Anyone who doesn’t want to miss out on the latest trends should talk to specialist exhibitors, experts and experienced users at the coming International Dental Show. There’s no better way to become well informed about the range of modern digital methods and the newest high-tech developments."

IDS takes place in Cologne every two years and is organised by the Society for the Promotion of the Dental Industry (Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Dental-Industrie) and the commercial enterprise of the VDDI, and staged by Koelnmesse, Cologne.